
ANNIVERSARY SERMON

DELIVERED BY THE

REV. DR. MATHIESON,

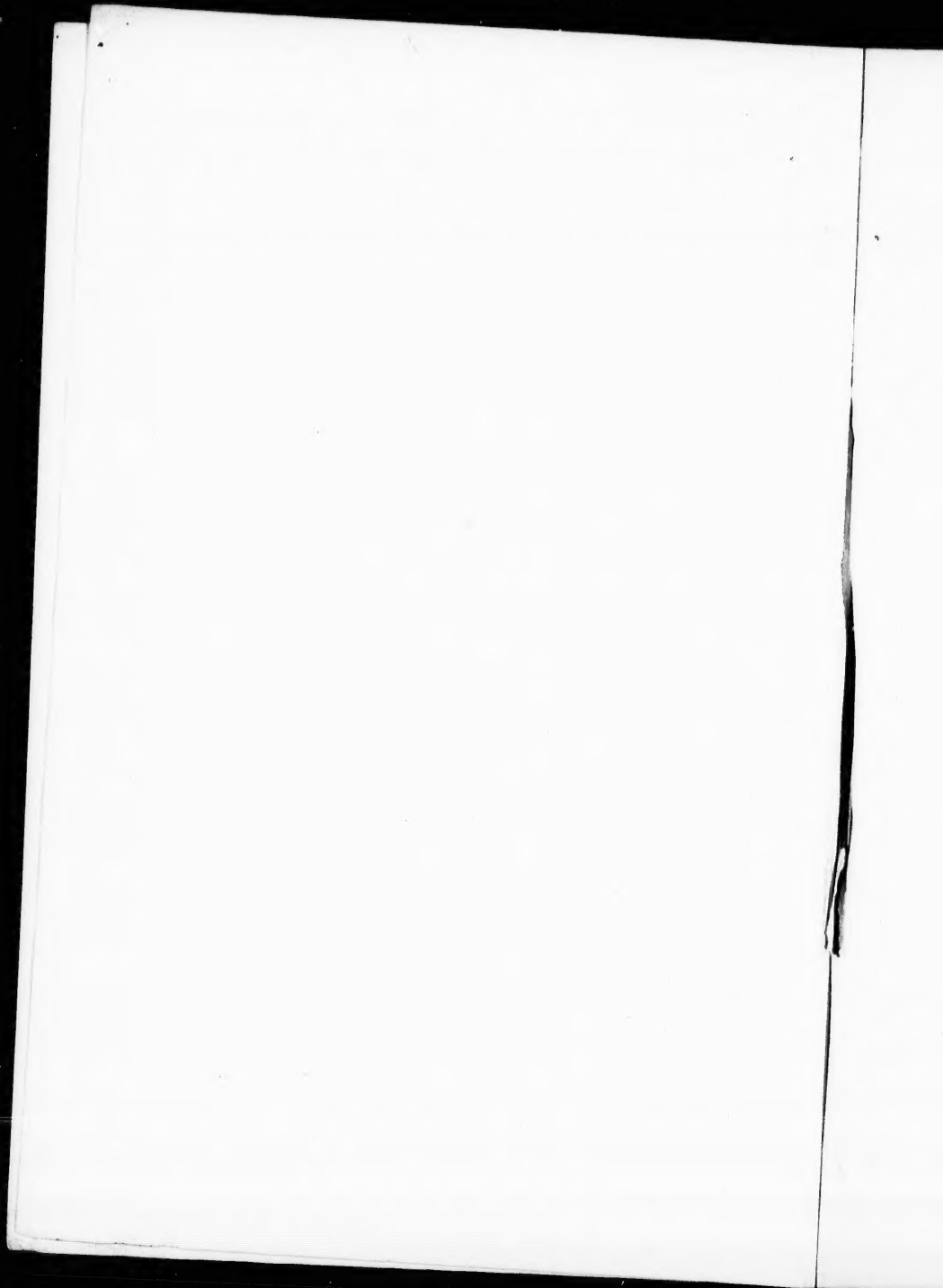
BEFORE THE

St. Andrew's Society, Montreal,

NOVEMBER 30TH, 1863.

St. Andrewes Soc., Mll.
Anniversary ...

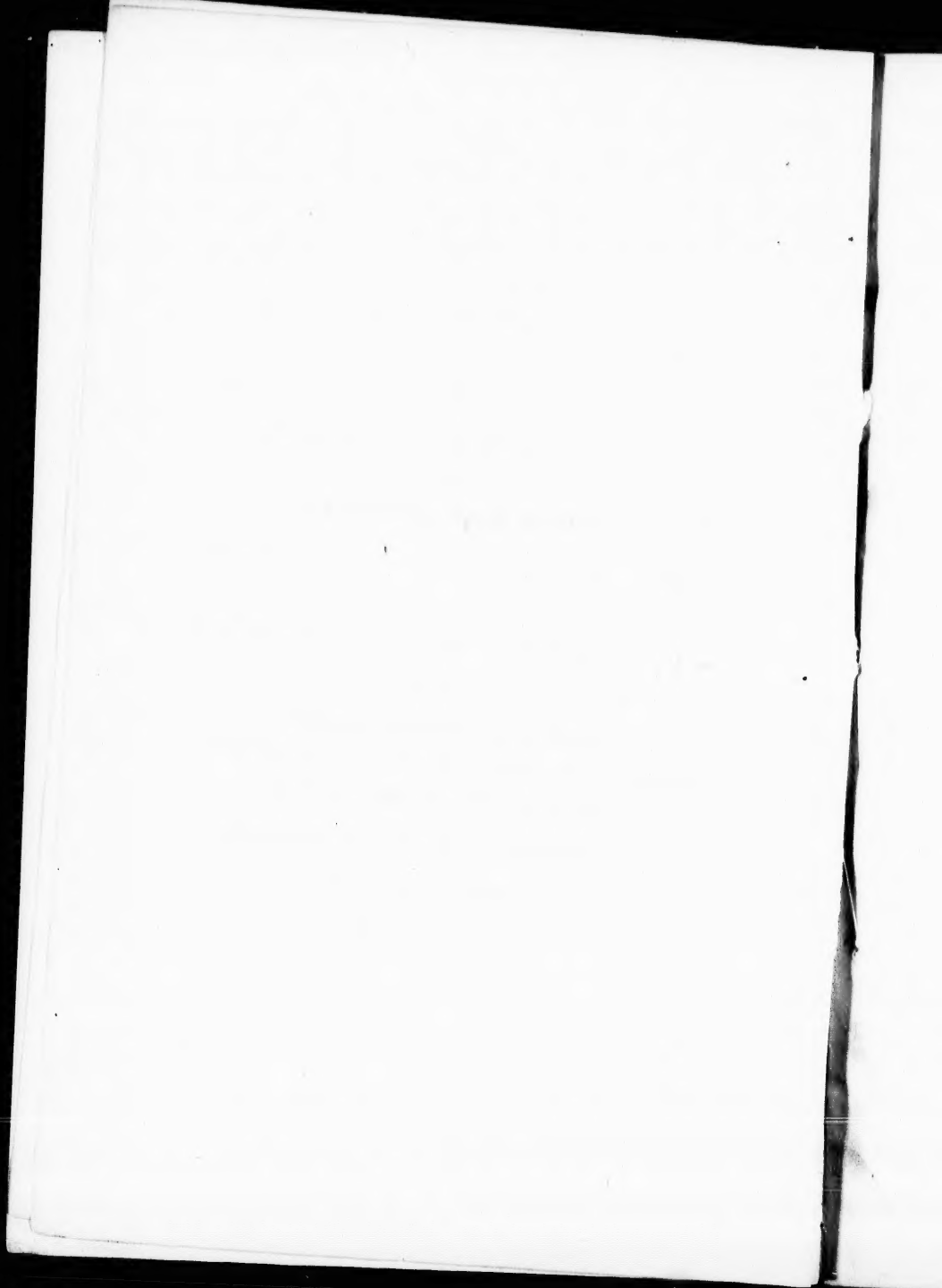
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TO
THE PRESIDENT,
THE
VICE-PRESIDENTS,
THE MANAGERS AND MEMBERS
OF THE
ST. ANDREW'S SOCIETY,
MONTREAL.

THIS SERMON,
PREACHED BEFORE THEM ON THE ANNIVERSARY OF THEIR SOCIETY,
AND PUBLISHED AT THEIR REQUEST,
IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED,

BY THEIR OBEDIENT SERVANT,
THE AUTHOR.



SERMON.

"Walk about Zion, and go round about her, tell the towers thereof—mark well her bulwarks, consider her palaces; that ye may tell it to the generations following."—*Ps. xlviii, 12, 13.*

My countrymen, and Christian friends,—it cannot be to us an object of much importance, whether our text be, as some imagine it to be, a grand, but laudable expression of national partiality, or which is much more likely, from the strain and structure of the Psalm itself, a fervent call on the citizens, to acknowledge by a solemn religious act, the Divine goodness manifested in some recent deliverance of the Jewish capital from imminent danger. In either case, we can easily enter into the feelings of the inspired penman. If in generous pride, he invites us to contemplate the external grandeur, and internal beauty of the "City of the Great King,"—the palaces, and the Temple of the "Holy Mountain," with their strong mural defenses, frowning defiance on every foe, we readily sympathise with the patriotic enthusiasm, that leads him in spirit-stirring strains to exult in the glory of his country. This is the common sentiment of humanity, not the peculiarity of a race. We all love the land we call our own. Every expression of admiration or regard for the land of his nativity that comes from the lips of another, touches a harmonious string in our own hearts, and instantly, as if by magic power, our own native land with its smiling landscapes, and endearing recollections, start up before our minds. Or if with others we suppose that the Psalmist's design is to lead us in solemn religious procession around the intact walls of Zion, which proud and powerful foes had confederated to level with the dust, we can with equal, or even greater facility, enter into the spirit of glowing piety, which directs the admiring eye to the lofty

towers of Zion, rearing their gigantic heads in unbroken strength—to her bulwarks, bristling at every salient point with the weapons of defence—to her palaces, rising in stately majesty; and above all, to that eternal Providence, which watches continually over God's people, and protects them from danger, without which their "watchmen would watch in vain," and all their warlike defenses would be in the day of trouble as stubble in the storm.

We cannot, my friends, even in imagination, contemplate without intense emotion, the scene which the Psalmist so vividly delineates. We feel as if we stood on holy ground, "we consider the days of old, the years of other times." We remember the stupendous transactions that inscribe their sacred character on every object we look upon. We are surrounded with the monumental records of the doings of the Lord—"the God that did wonders, and declared His strength among the people." We everywhere trace His footsteps—we hear His awful voice—we see His wonder-working hand. This is more than the excitement of generous sympathy, with the sentiments of the inspired poet. We have a personal interest in the "outgoings of Jehovah," in behalf of his ancient people, for with their privileges as the Church of God, our own spiritual privileges are intimately blended. The very God who dwelt in the palaces of Zion, for her glory and defense, is our God forever and forever.

Following out this view of the text, we might appropriately and profitably call your attention to your privileges and prospects as members of the Church of Christ—to the confidence with which you may rely on the Divine favor and protection, in every difficulty and in every danger, if you are truly God's people; and to the obligations which the experience of the Divine goodness imposes,—viz: humble submission to the will of God—faith in His promises—gratitude for His mercies, and the diligent inculcation of religious truth, on the minds of the rising generation. Or to employ the beautiful language of the text, we might invite

you to walk about Zion and go round about her—to tell her towers, and mark her bulwarks, and consider her palaces, that we might tell it to posterity.

But we purpose in this discourse, very slightly to depart from this general, and more obvious course of illustration, by accommodating our text to the peculiar circumstances which have brought us this day together “within the courts of God’s House.” We trust we shall not go beyond the legitimate bounds, which the rules, both of just interpretation, and faithful application of scripture, allow, by making our remarks bear directly on those distinguishing characteristics of her people, that under God constitute at once the security and ornament of Scotland—that form her towers of strength—her ramparts of defense—and the glory in the midst of her.

It must be a pleasing, and to a well constituted mind, a profitable employment, to cherish the tender and benevolent affections which form the elements of true patriotism—to recall the pleasing incidents of youth—in memory, to muse on the deeds of our departed countrymen—to mark the effects of the laws and institutions which we have been taught to venerate, on the intellectual, moral, and religious habits of the people. “That man,” said the “Great Moral-ist,” with a profound knowledge of the human heart, and a warmth of enthusiasm that did honor to his feelings,—“that man is little to be envied whose patriotism would not gain force, on the plains of Marathon, or whose piety would not grow warmer among the ruins of Iona.” Nor is that man to be envied, my countrymen, whose thoughts seldom revert to the incidents of early life, and the distinguishing events in his nation’s history. Or, who scanning the record of the past; feels not his heart more firmly bound to his country; feels not a more ardent affection for his countrymen; feels not a more fervent love for that Gracious Being, who has opened up so many sources of enjoyment, in the sweet recollections of the past, and crowned his lot with so many national blessings.

My brethren, it ought to be to us, a matter of heartfelt gratitude to God, that in turning our thoughts to our common country, we have so many noble objects to admire ; so many beautiful models to imitate ; so much that has a direct tendency to transfuse into our own characters the virtues of our grey-haired sires, whose venerable forms rise up before us with something of that awful reverence which we pay to beings of a superior nature. Give me for a little your attention, my brethren, while, with the finger of admiration, I point to your beloved native land, and bid you mark well the gracious arrangements of a kind Providence, so visible in her history and institutions. Although the gnawing tooth of time has left some marks of its destroying power on the towers and bulwarks, raised for the nation's defence, by the profound wisdom and indomitable courage of our Godfearing fathers, still there is enough visible to command admiration, and call forth our profound regard. God is still known in her palaces for a refuge ; her intellectual might, her moral grandeur, her religious excellence still remains intact ; her time hallowed institutions which have diffused happiness through the halls of the rich, and contentment and peace around the cottage hearths of the poor, survive the hostile attacks of their impious assailants, and still secure the rights, privileges, and liberty of all classes of the people. Let her children continue true to themselves, loyal to their Monarch—faithful in the service of Him who is the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, and long with patriotic enthusiasm, they will be able to appropriate the triumphant language of the Hebrew Monarch, "walk about Zion," &c.

In taking a cursory glance at Scotland—her people—her institutions: first of all turn your eyes to her intellectual strength. Scotland has achieved a renown through the intellect of her gifted sons, wide as the globe ; and more enduring than the massive monuments, which a grateful nation erects, to perpetuate the memory of those who have adorned her with their virtues, or died in her defence—the products of Scottish thought and Scottish energy ; like strong towers erected for beauty

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and defence, rise gracefully over the length and breadth of the land. Born of divine truth—cradled in continual struggles for civil and religious liberty ; “ nurtured by the sincere milk of the word ;” living in the blessed light, and breathing the free air of heaven, the national mind early burst from its swathing bands of ignorance and superstition, and attained a masculine vigor, which fitted it to grasp the most stupendous truths in science and philosophy. And now and again, disporting amidst the wild flowers of romance and poesy, which spring up spontaneously from the softer and gentler feelings of the religious heart, it acquired a gracefulness and ease that has rarely been equalled, and never surpassed by the genius of any other nation. The products of Scotch literature and thought, are as varied as they are bold and beautiful—we cannot describe them—we can only “ tell her towers.” Were we to examine the distinguishing excellencies of each, the shades of evening would descend upon us, and call us away to other duties, before we could have done. Her divines and moralists—her philosophers and poets—her historians and statesmen—her men of erudition and practical science—her warriors and artificers—we must pass them all by, without even a passing tribute to individual worth. Advancing in long and unbroken succession, at first they seem like god-like shadows out of the dim profound of past ages. But as they near our times they give defined form and practical development to their genius—genius that has extorted from nature some of her profoundest secrets, and has compelled into its service, some of her most stupendous powers. The still equal march of Scotland, with the most enlightened nations of the earth in the paths of literature and science ; her unflagging energies, whether exhibited in the fascinating productions of the pen and pencil, or in the complicated mechanical forms that start into existence from beneath the hammer—her freedom of thought, and prudence of action, at once spurning away spiritual despotism and the tyranny of arbitrary power, give goodly promise that the line of “ her worthies ” shall extend far into the future with

undiminished—yea, with increasing glory. The fruits of Scottish intellect, as exhibited in the growing wealth and splendour of her cities—in richer crops waving in her naturally sterile fields, and under her somewhat inclement skies, than ever gladdened the eye of the husbandman on the most fertile soils, and genial climes. Her vast mineral resources, extracted in shapeless lumps from the dark bowels of the earth, and by the combined skill of science and art, presented in the most beautiful forms, for the uses or elegancies of life, or converted by the brawny arms of her artisans into propelling poswer for those stupendous palaces she has set afloat on every sea, or those elegant vehicles that give the speed of the winds to human intercourse, and bid fair, not far hence, to bring the utmost ends of the earth into contiguity “and man wi’ man the world o’er shall brithers be,” are living monuments of our country’s greatness—trophies of her intellectual might. They are her strong towers of defense—for they are attended with a consciousness of power and independence, in which she can securely trust, should a foreign foe threaten her peace; and with the will and ability to repel the aggressor that would endanger them, and being all connected by one living band of union, the free and enlightened minds and loving patriotic hearts of her people, they stand as “a wall of fire around our much loved isle.” Perhaps no country in the wide world affords such a happy illustration of the benefits arising from intellectual cultivation, and the diffusion of knowledge among all classes of the community, as Scotland at this day presents to the eye of the intelligent stranger.

In the second place, brethren, I invite you to “mark well her bulwarks”—the moral habits of the people of Scotland;—that present the most formidable bulwarks against the encroachments of tyranny and oppression, and give such security to the rights and the liberties of all classes of the community. Without a wide diffusion of truth and of virtue, a people could neither appreciate, nor obtain real freedom. Liberty and morality are inseparable companions. The

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truth maketh men free indeed. Surely, brethren, never was
 there a people so blessed of heaven, with the knowledge of
 the truth, and the faithful inculcation of the duties founded
 on it, as the people of Scotland have been. The high prin-
 ciples of conscience, of the fear of God, and of reverential
 respect for all his laws, were impressed upon the hearts of
 her people with sacred care. In public, in private, in the
 church, and around "the clean hearth stane," the doctrines
 and the duties of morality and religion were solemnly incul-
 cated. These were the subjects of constant and profound
 thought with our pious forefathers. They conceived, and
 they conceived rightly, that the firmest foundation on which
 they could rest the nation's freedom and glory, and peace,
 was in the well-informed minds, and well enlightened and
 cultivated hearts of her people. They foresaw that the
 surest bulwarks they could raise, to protect the rights
 and privileges of all classes, from the usurpations of ambi-
 tious power, on the one hand, and the dangerous encroach-
 ments of popular tumults on the other, was the fear of God,
 and a sacred regard for the dictates of an enlightened con-
 science. They judged, and they judged rightly, that the
 best way of making Rulers just, generous and benignant,
 and the people loyal, happy and independent—independent
 in the noblest sense of the word—was to give them an edu-
 cation based on the word of God, and to cultivate the moral
 sentiments. This, they set themselves to do, calmly, sys-
 tematically, perseveringly ; they struggled against the most
 formidable opposing difficulties, till success crowned their
 toils. The blessed fruits of their efforts have been a com-
 bination of moral excellencies, that have qualified their
 children for filling offices of the highest power and trust
 with credit to themselves and honour to their nation. Mark
 well your country's bulwarks ; to which with the blessing
 of God, you owe the peaceful enjoyment of the fruits of
 your industry, and the security of your lives and liberties.
 If high intellectual development and the general diffusion
 of knowledge, by evoking its resources, give grandeur and

strength to a nation, it is a terrible grandeur, a dreadful strength, for they may be turned and have ever been turned, to the destruction of all that is great and good, when not directed and controlled by a pure morality. There is a fearful sublimity, in uncontrolled intellectual might. Like the rush of the tempest it sweeps everything in its course, into indiscriminate confusion and ruin. But like the sweet breath of the Spring, that wakes from the yielding earth innumerable forms of beauty and beneficence, intellectual energy tempered and purified by a pervading piety, and regulated by moral principles, by calling forth the industry and accumulating the enjoyments of man, and at the same time awakening a conscious independence and love of liberty, will advance him in the scale of social elevation and spiritual enjoyment.

3rd. Consider her palaces.—Consider the deep religious sentiments of the Scottish people. Our religious sentiments are the true abodes of Majesty—the seat of legitimate authority and supreme power—God is the Lord, He is Ruler over the Nations. He alone is to be feared and held in reverence by all his creatures.

A deep reverential acknowledgment of a divine Superintending Power, is the fundamental principle of the British Constitution. And it implies a sacred respect for the worship of God, and dutiful obedience to all lawfully constituted authorities, in the legitimate exercise of their functions, as the vicegerents of heaven. "Let every soul be subject to the higher powers—for there is no power but of God—for the powers that be, are ordained of God." "Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God" is the absolute law of the Almighty. Our civil duties are thus placed on a sacred basis, and enforced by the awful sanctions of Jehovah himself. We mean not to entangle ourselves in those speculative discussions, respecting the nature of this "divine right"—discussions in which many monstrous doctrines have been broached; on the one hand demanding as a sacred duty abject submission to the will of the Supreme Magistrate,

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under all circumstances whatsoever; and on the other hand claiming for the ever fluctuating opinions of the popular mind, or even for our own capricious judgments, a right to determine to whom, and to what extent we should yield our obedience. The only standard of duty is the will of God. The knowledge of His will is to be earnestly and diligently sought after, both by Rulers and people. By the one, that they may know with what limitations they have a right to exact obedience. By the others, that they also may know, to what extent it is their sacred duty to yield it. This knowledge all may obtain. God hath graciously given to mankind a revelation of his will. By the light of revelation, that law,—the almost obliterated law "written on the fleshly tables of the heart" may again be read,—and can only be accurately read and interpreted, in the light reflected from the inspired volume, and it is the sacred duty of all men, to conform themselves to those intimations of the divine will, so that rulers and people may be united in the subjection to their common Sovereign, the King of Kings, and discharge aright their reciprocal duties, which are the great ends designed to be effected by all civil governments. It is true, in the inspired records there is no special form of government laid down, and enforced by divine authority, applicable to the temporal condition and circumstances of all mankind. But the fundamental and eternal principles of all civil governments, are distinctly stated, and it is an indispensable obligation upon all mankind to honor these principles, by incorporating them as essential elements in that form of government, whatever it may be—which they are pleased to adopt as most conducive to their own peace and security. Kings must rule in the name and for the glory of God, otherwise they are impious usurpers of a divine right. The people must obey as the willing subjects of the Eternal King, the righteous mandates of the earthly rulers, for they are the "Lord's anointed," otherwise, they are daring rebels.

The fundamental principle of the British constitution, as we have said, is the eternal truth that Jehovah reigns su-

preme. This principle is acknowledged in the legend* of Sovereign power and authority—in the spirit of National law,—and in the reverential sentiments of the people ; and if it were only practically and faithfully wrought out, peace and prosperity would overspread the land.

“Consider her palaces”—consider how many inestimable blessings flow from a constitution where the civil and religious elements are so righteously conjoined—where kings rule in the name and fear of God—where the people submit themselves to those who bear rule over them, “as unto the servant of God for conscience sake.” There are no encroachments on natural rights. The privileges of each class of the community are distinctly defined and acknowledged. The liberty and independence of each and all in their mutual relations are secured, not only by the supreme authority of Law, but also by a conscientious sense of duty. A free, a noble, and permanent impulse is given to the mental and moral faculties of our nature, by the fervour of religious enthusiasm, far above the temporary excitement of a mere love of country. Patriotism is hallowed by religion. It becomes a holy duty. The dearest interests of man are involved in its actings. Even his civil liberties become of infinite magnitude, from the eternal spirit of religious truth, which nourishes them and consecrates them to higher aims, than belong to time. We spoke but the truth when we affirmed, that the intellectual strength and moral worth of the Scottish people, are the offspring of her religious institutions. Both their minds and their hearts were nurtured by “the sincere milk of the word.” Notwithstanding the deteriorating change, that, as we fear, has passed upon the character of Scotchmen, they still exhibit a just subordination, and a reverential regard to Supreme authority. There is still a great savour of piety throughout the land. The people of Scotland born to a rich inheritance of spiritual privileges,—the fruits of many prayers—of much religious instruction—of much battling for religious freedom, are, universally allow-

* By the Grace of God, King of Great Britain and Ireland.

ed to be a religious people. Amidst "abounding iniquity," throughout the land, there are still many thousands "who fear the Lord and serve him." There are still the most abundant and satisfactory evidences, that the Lord God sits enthroned amidst the reverential feelings of the Scottish heart,—and binds in the unity of holy beauty the intellectual grandeur, the moral excellence, and the religious fervour of the nation. "The Lord reigneth." "He is clothed with majesty," and the people rejoice, and are glad thereof.

It is not, my brethren, to inflate your minds with vain pride, that we have called you to survey the towers—the bulwarks and the palaces of your Fatherland. It is to fill your minds with the nobler ambition, to reflect in your personal conduct and character, the virtues that constitute the true glory of your native country. The object we have had in view in leading you to survey her intellectual, moral, and spiritual defences, is, that "you may tell it to posterity,"—that you may transmit the fame of men so illustrious—of actions so distinguished—of national institutions so admirable to succeeding generations—and in your own persons present such a picture of true glory, as will fire their spirits, with the noble ambition of giving a practical exhibition of national greatness.

This duty divides itself into two great branches, both of which demand your consideration. First, that you may tell to posterity by what means these noble structures have been raised. Second, how they have been and may still be preserved.

The primary and by far the most influential of the means employed in raising the spiritual defences of our Fatherland,—was the Bible, and the system of domestic and public instruction, founded on free access to the word of God, or in other words, the "Church in the House," and the "Church in the Land"; or that admirably devised, and faithfully executed agency—usually denominated the "Parochial System," comprising, 1st, the legal recognition of the Sabbath, not only as a Divine, but as a national institution, and essentially connect-

ed with it, the worship of God ; 2nd, the Eldership, or the moral and religious superintendence of the community, and the management and support of the poor ; and 3rd, the Parochial Schools, blending religious and secular instruction, in a way that is perfectly consistent with the freest spirit of toleration and the widest extension of a good general education.

Brethren, we have drawn so largely on your attention and time, that we cannot enter now on the full statement and illustration of these topics. By shewing the intimate connection that exists between the domestic, the ecclesiastical and educational economies of our native country, and the influence they have in the formation, and conservation of the national character, we can best "tell to the generations" following, how—

A virtuous populace may rise the while
And stand a wall of fire around their much lov'd isle.

That the nation's greatness is chiefly to be ascribed to her religious institutions few will dispute whose judgment is of any value ; these are her principal bulwarks still ; or rather that spirit of civil and religious liberty,—that profound piety, and that moral excellence which these institutions inspire and cherish, is at once the glory and defence of the nation. True to these principles, which her church unweariedly and affectionately inculcates, she may frown defiance on her foes. No attempt to enslave her physically or mentally can succeed, so long as her venerable and sacred institutions remain intact, and their principles are faithfully wrought out. For "God is known in her palaces for a refuge."

We have invited you this day to walk about Zion, to tell her towers and mark her bulwarks, and consider her palaces that you may tell it to posterity, that God who has been your fathers' God, is your God for ever and for ever. Tell in your character what great things the Lord hath done for you ; tell in your conduct that God is your guide ; even unto death. Let your moral and religious feelings,—your steady, honor-

able and ever advancing course to excellence, tell, in whatever land you are, that you are Scotchmen. Let profound reverence for God's word and God's worship, tell to all nations that your fathers' God is your God. Let the sacred institutions to which, with the blessing of God you owe so much, be transmitted unpolluted and unimpaired to posterity, to tell what you have seen, and what you have heard in the "city of the Great King"—the "city of God." When you cease to familiarize your minds with the truths of God's word, you renounce your allegiance to Him. When you cease to obey His Laws—when you profane His Sabbath and neglect His worship, you betray your country's honor and stain her glory. You may marshal yourselves under whatsoever banners you choose to follow; no one will recognize in you the descendants of those noble hearted men, who in days of old unfurled these proud standards to the free winds of heaven, and under their shade, achieved your liberty and secured your national privileges.

What! are there any here who have left the shores of their Fatherland, and forgotten its heath-covered mountains, its sweet shady glens, and daisy-decked valleys. Are there any here who have forgotten their parental Home,—their Parish Church and Parish School, and freed from the restraints which a parent's inspection, or a nation's sober piety imposed on the wayward impulses of youth, have renounced the distinguishing characteristics of their native land, and virtually abjured the name of Scotchmen. Before you seal the record of your base defection, return with me in imagination but for a moment to the scenes of your youth. Mingle once more in that happy group of playmates, where lasting friendships were formed, and a desire for general knowledge was stimulated, sometimes under a stern, but always under an affectionate discipline; or, on the Sabbath morn, listen to that "church-going bell," and with the stillness and serenity that reigns over the peaceful landscape, enter that lowly Temple—give ear to the voice "the man of God" telling to earnest worshippers what Jesus did and suffered to bring

life and peace to men, and beseeching them "to live to the praise of the glory of his grace"; listen to the simple melody that in sweet and artless notes, but from hearts attuned, that arises in praise of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. And now, leaving the House of God, enter into the home of your childhood, and listen to that gentle, low voice that nightly teaches you to repeat—"Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven," or to those deep-toned utterances of the heart, that commit you to God's holy keeping, through all your earthly pilgrimage, and then—if you retain the honest feelings of a man—refuse, if you can, practically to tell to posterity—to tell nightly to your children—to tell weekly to the world, how the intellectual character of your country has been formed; how her moral and religious defences were reared; how they have been preserved, and may still be maintained as the strongest of the nation's bulwarks from generation to generation.

Dear to my spirit, Scotland, hast thou been,
 Since infant years, in all thy glens of green!
 Land of my love, where every sound and sight
 Comes in soft melody, or melts in light;
 Land of the green wood by the silver rill,
 The heather and the daisy of the hill,
 The guardian thistle to the foeman stern,
 The wild rose, hawthorn, and the lady fern,
 Land of the lark, that like a seraph sings,
 Beyond the rainbow upon quivering wings;
 Land of wild beauty, and romantic shapes,
 Of sheltered valleys, and of stormy capes,
 Of the bright garden and the tangled brake
 Of the dark mountain and the sun-lit lake;
 Land of my birth and of my father's grave,
 The eagle's home, and the eyrie of the brave!
 The foot of slave thy heather never stained,
 Nor rocks, that battlement thy sons profaned!
 Unrivalled land of science and of arts;
 Land of fair faces and of faithful hearts;
 Land where religion paves her heavenward road,
 Land of the Temple of the Living God!
 Yet dear to feeling Scotland as thou art,
 Should'st thou that glorious temple e'er desert,

I would disclaim thee—seek the distant shore
Of some fair isle—and then return no more.

JAMES GRAY, Edinburgh.—“*Sabbath Among the Mountains.*”

It has been customary on such occasions as this to give a brief *resume* of the officers of the Society for the year. No financial statement has reached me, to enable me to do this in a satisfactory way. The good that has been effected however, has, I believe, been considerable, and I have no doubt, details will be given to you by your office-bearers, through another channel. The claimants on your bounty are numerous, and their destitution greater, than the ordinary resources of the Society can adequately supply. When you come together to acknowledge the living God to be your God, to “think of his loving kindness in the midst of his temple,” and to thank and praise his holy name for all his goodness,—with your hearts warmed with devotion, and stirred up into sacred enthusiasm, by the sweet memories of “what we have heard, so have we seen in the city of the Lord of Hosts, the city of our God,” let them flow out in generous sympathies with the wants and sufferings of your brethren, in obedience to the command of your God. “If thy brother be waxen poor and fallen in decay with thee, then thou shalt relieve him, yea though he be a stranger or a sojourner. * * * I am the Lord your God.” It is not because his sufferings appeal to your sensibilities.—It is not because there is genuine satisfaction in relieving the poor and the needy.—It is not because you may receive the gratitude of the object of your bounty—or obtain the approbation of them who may witness your good deed. No; it is because he is a brother, and your Great Father commands you. If a sacred regard to the will of God be not the leading principle of your charity—it is spurious—a base oblation laid on the altar of vanity. It may be accompanied with the *peans* of national glory—it may be exhibited with all the pomps and circumstances of joyful anniversaries—as the year comes round you may assemble and greet one another as having come from the same smiling valleys and heath-covered hills

—you may raise high your banners,* emblazoned with the emblems of national prowess, and inscribed with the legend "*Relieve the Distressed*,"—but unless love to God, and the christian sympathies which the love to God inspires, enkindles your sacrifice, it is lighted with unhallowed fire; and the legend inscribed on that banner if it speaks the truth, will only speak to you in mockery. It will be the taunting record of the characteristic virtues of your fathers, but virtues that belong not to you. However powerful the appeals of your country may be, to your compassionate love and generous beneficence; however legitimate national memories may be to awaken your sympathies,—they are subordinate to the command of God—who has made your christian beneficence a test of your love for him, and established your practical charity, as the criterion by which the blessings of heaven, purchased by the love and sufferings of our gracious Redeemer, shall be awarded. "For the King shall say, when he cometh in His glory, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you, from the foundation of the world: for I was an hungered and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty and ye gave me drink. I was a stranger and ye took me in; naked, and ye clothed me; sick and in prison, and ye visited me. For, verily, I say unto you, for-as-much as ye have done it unto the least of these my brethren ye have done it unto me." The least of my brethren!!—done it unto me!! Mark these expressions—your charity is the token of your brotherly love—the test of your love for Him, who loved you, and gave Himself for you.

It is the Christly work of feeding the hungry, of clothing the naked, and providing a home for the homeless, that you have selected within your own limited sphere. Go on in the course you have entered with increasing zeal and fidelity. By the blessing of God on your labours you have been the means of doing much good.—Be thankful! The

* On their National Anniversary the St. Andrew's Society, have hitherto in procession marched to Church with their national emblems and banners, on one of which the legend is inscribed, "*Relieve the Distressed*," indicative of the object they have chiefly in view.

amount of good done, has not been in proportion to the favors that God has bestowed upon you.—Be humble! Your anniversary collections have never been so great as the wants of your indigent countrymen call for.—Be more liberal. Some of you, not remembering that a collection was to be made, may have forgotten to put money in your purses; borrow from those who have, unless they intend to empty their own into that of the Society's purse-bearer; then take a pencil, give a *bon* for the amount, and some of the office-bearers will thankfully receive its liquidation. But whatever you do, do it to the glory of God. Degrade not a holy duty, unto a selfish gratification. Dishonour not the generous impulses of national feeling by the incitements of animal instincts. Give as conscience dictates, and as God commands. Listen to the words he has caused to be recorded for your encouragement:—"God loveth the cheerful giver,"—"God hateth the covetous,"—"He that giveth to the poor lendeth to the Lord,"—"Cast your bread upon the waters, for thou shall find it after many days"—"Blessed is the man that considereth the poor, * * * he shall be blessed on the earth." Your christian beneficence is the criterion of the power of the Gospel in your hearts—it is a test of the purity of your patriotism. May I hope that you will, at this time, give substantial proof that your religion is genuine, and your patriotism is pure.

I add no more but my fervent prayer that God may bless and prosper you in your work of love---may make your bounty a blessing unto the poor, and a means of showing forth His glory. Amen.

MONTREAL:

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